

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 KABUL 06947 280742Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02
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R 280500Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9751
INFO MEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 7557
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
USLO PEKING
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L KABUL 6947

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TAGS: PGOV, PINS, PINR, AF, UR
SUBJ: DEPARTING AMERICAN SCHOLAR'S VIEWS ON THE AFGHAN REGIME

REF: A) KABUL 6729, B) KABUL 6783

1. SUMMARY: AMERICAN SCHOLAR LOUIS DUPREE SEES FOREIGN MINISTER HAFIZULLAH AMIN AS THE EMERGING RULER OF AFGHANISTAN. HE PREDICTS THE COLLAPSE OF THE KABUL REGIME BY MARCH 1979. END SUMMARY.

2. ON AUG 21, DR. LOUIS DUPREE, THE PROMINENT AMERICAN AFGHAN-OLOGIST AND LONG-TIME KABUL RESIDENT, PAID A FAREWELL CALL ON EMBASSY OFFICERS. DUPREE, WHO WAS BEING EXPELLED FROM AFGHANISTAN, OSTENSIBLY FOR POLITICAL REASONS, WAS DRIVING TO PAKISTAN THE FOLLOWING DAY WITH HIS WIFE, ALSO A SCHOLAR OF AFGHAN STUDIES IN HER OWN RIGHT (REF A). THE DUPREES HOPE HENCEFORTH TO BE BASED IN PAKISTAN, WORKING FOR THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITIES FIELD STAFF.

3. DUPREE, WHO WAS UNDERSTANDABLY BITTER, BLAMED HIS EXPULSION ON
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 KABUL 06947 280742Z

HAFIZULLAH AMIN, FOREIGN MINISTER AND DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER, WHOM DUPREE HAS KNOWN SINCE THE LATTER'S STUDENT DAYS AT COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY. (INCIDENTALLY, DUPREE BELIEVES THAT AMIN DEVELOPED SOME OF HIS ANTI-WEST FEELINGS BECAUSE OF HIS FAILURE TO COMPLETE SUCCESSFULLY HIS USAID-SPONSORED GRADUATE STUDY PROGRAM AT COLUMBIA.)

4. DUPREE DESCRIBED AMIN AS POWER-MAD AND RUTHLESS. HE THINKS THAT

AMIN IS DRIVING FOR THE PARAMOUNT POSITION IN AFGHANISTAN, AND, INDEED, ALSO WANTS TO BECOME A PROMINENT LEADER IN THE NONALIGNED MOVEMENT. DUPREE CONSIDERS AMIN AS MORE OF A FASCIST THAN A COMMUNIST, AND REGARDS THE PRO-COMMUNIST THRUST OF AMIN'S SPEECHES AT HAVANA AND BELGRADE AS DESIGNED SOLELY TO IMPRESS THE SOVIETS AND OTHER RADICAL STATES. DUPREE DOES NOT THINK AMIN'S VERBIAGE NECESSARILY REFLECTS HIS TRUE IDEOLOGICAL BELIEFS, BECAUSE HE THINKS THAT THE AFGHAN LEADER IS DRIVEN MORE BY AMBITION THAN DOGMA. DUPREE RECALLS A CONVERSATION HE HAD SEVERAL YEARS AGO WITH AMIN IN WHICH THE LATTER STATED THAT HE WANTED TO BECOME A "KING-KILLER", SPECIFICALLY IDENTIFYING THE SHAH OF IRAN AS ONE OF HIS EVENTUAL TARGETS. DURING THE SAME CONVERSATION, AMIN ALLEGEDLY SAW AFGHANISTAN AS EVENTUALLY EXTENDING ITS CONTROL FROM THE PERSIAN GULF TO THE INDUS.

5. DUPREE THINKS NOOR MOHAMMAD TARAKI, CHAIRMAN OF THE REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL AND PRIME MINISTER, HAS ALREADY LOST THE POWER STRUGGLE WITH AMIN. (COMMENT: WE NOTE THAT IT IS AMIN WHO MORE FREQUENTLY HOLDS OPEN COURT FOR PETITIONERS FROM THE GENERAL PUBLIC, IN THE STYLE OF A TRADITIONAL AFGHAN MONARCH. END OF COMMENT.) TARAKI IS NOW SURROUNDED ONLY BY "SCHOLARS AND THE INTELLIGENTSIA". AMIN ON THE OTHER HAND, SAYS DUPREE, IS SURROUNDED BY "GOONS" WITH LITTLE IDEOLOGICAL MOTIVATION, THROUGH WHOM HE IS MONOPOLIZING ACTUAL SUPREME POWER. WHEN AMIN DECIDES TO DISPLACE TARAKI, OPINED SUPREE, HE MAY NOT HAVE HIM KILLED BECAUSE THAT ACT COULD ALIENATE SOME LEFTISTS, BUT MIGHT INSTEAD SEND TARAKI INTO DIPLOMATIC CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 KABUL 06947 280742Z

EXILE OR SET HIM UP AS A TITULAR "PRESIDENT" WITHOUT REAL POWER.

6. DUPREE EXPECTS GUERRILLA WARFARE TO INCREASE IN AFGHANISTAN THIS AUTUMN, AFTER THE CROPS ARE GATHERED. HE OBSERVED THAT FORMER PRESIDENT MOHAMMAD DAOUD, WHATEVER HIS OTHER FAULTS, NEVER LOST CONTROL OF THE COUNTRYSIDE. THE NEW REGIME, SAID DUPREE, HAS NOT GAINED CONTROL OVER THE COUNTRYSIDE -- AND NEVER WILL. HE EXPECTS THE PRESENT REGIME TO COLLAPSE BY MARCH.

7. RETURNING TO THE TOPIC OF AMIN, DUPREE WONDERED WHETHER IT MIGHT NOT OCCUR TO THE SOVIETS THAT HE IS NOW A LIABILITY INSTEAD OF AN ASSET, BECAUSE OF HIS WANTON RUSH FOR EXCLUSIVE POWER. IF AMIN IS ASSASSINATED, OPINED DUPREE, IT WILL BE BY EITHER THE KGB OR THE IKHWAN-I-MULLIMIN (MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD). THE LATTER RIGHTIST FANATICS, CLAIMED DUPREE, ARE ONLY WAITING FOR A CLOSE, CERTAIN SHOT.

8. COMMENT: THIS EMBASSY HAS ALWAYS FOUND DUPREE'S OBSERVATIONS INTERESTING, AND WORTH LISTENING TO, ALTHOUGH WE HAVE OFTEN DIFFERED WITH DUPREE ON POLITICAL ANALYSIS. IN THIS INSTANCE, WE DO NOT SHARE DUPREE'S BELIEF THAT IDEOLOGY IS NOT A STRONG FACTOR IN AMIN'S MAKE-UP. WE CONSIDER HIM A DEDICATED MARXIST. WE AGREE WITH DUPREE THAT, WITH SO MUCH BLOOD ON HIS HANDS, AMIN'S LONG-TERM BODILY

SECURITY OUTLOOK IS NOT GOOD. WE TEND TO DISMISS, HOWEVER, DUPREE'S
SPECULATIONS THAT THE KGB MIGHT END HIS TENURE.
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